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Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 203 (2015) 419 – 424

Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences

International Conference EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY CHALLENGES - TEACHERS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY - 3RD EDITION, EPC-TKS 2015

Correlative Study between Academic Satisfaction, Workload and Level of Academic Stress at 3rd Grade Students at Psychology

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Abstract

This study is focused to evidence possible correlations between stress reactivity, level of satisfaction and workload at psychology students from Faculty of Psychology, University of Bucharest. Furthermore it was tested statistically difference between the first grade and third grade students regarding the dependent variables: stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management and total motivation-satisfaction. The results confirm a negative statistically significant correlation between satisfaction-motivation and stress reactivity ($r = -.401$; $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, there were provided higher statistically significant differences at stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management and total motivation-satisfaction for the students from third grade comprising to the students from first grade.

Peer-review under responsibility of the Scientific Committee of EPC-TKS 2015.

Keywords: stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management.

1. Introduction

El-Ghoroury, Galper, Sawaqdeh & Bufka, (2012) highlighted that the thematic stress and the strategies of coping among young graduates of psychology, is reduced, while scientific research publications on stress type, and career components among professional psychologists have advanced considerably in recent years. Carveth, Gesse & Moss (1996) - in their study on nurse-midwifery students - highlighted that stressors include student perception, lack of necessary knowledge base stretches. In accordance with Abouserie (1994) students face academic stress when studying for exams on their results because of competition and the large amount of knowledge that assimilate in a

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Peer-review under responsibility of the Scientific Committee of EPC-TKS 2015.
doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.08.317

very short time. From the institutional point of view, stress can be associated with the classroom, overcrowding, inadequate resources to achieve academic work (Awino & Agolli, 2008). García-Ros, Pérez-González, Pérez-Blasco & Natividad (2012) examines the main sources of stress in their first year university students. The authors showed that the highest level of stress is evident in areas such as oral presentations, academic overload, lack of time and final examinations. Aniței & Chraif (2013a) were studying on psychology students' gender differences in measuring positive and negative emotions, Aniței & Chraif (2013b) studied the relationship between perceived stressors and positive and negative emotions at psychology students,

Anitei & Chraif (2013c) validated in academic environment a coping styles inventory on Romanian psychology students, Chraif, Anitei & Andreea (2013) investigated the relationship between reaction time, performances in competition and motivation from competition differences among young psychology students using OLMT motivational assessment test from Vienna Tests System and Anitei, Chraif & Bârcă (2010) were involved in validation procedure of an academic environment stress measurement instrument on psychology students. Garkaz, Banimaha and Esmaeili (2011) showed that there is not a significant relationship between marital status and family influence in the sense of encouraging or discouraging not influence student academic performance. Jayakumar and Sulthan (2013) highlighted that student stress is caused mainly by two factors: assessment of academic and non-academic factors. Hence, according the authors academic pressure is a main power source for many students: fear of lagging behind, finding the motivation to learn, time pressure, financial worries, concern regarding the academic skills that they have.

2. Objectives and hypotheses

2.1. Objectives

• To highlight possible bivariate correlations between academic motivation, workload and level of academic stress at 3rd grade students at Psychology.

2.2. Hypotheses

• There are positive, statistically significant correlations between total motivation-satisfaction and the stress reactivity.

• There are positive, statistically significant correlations between total motivation-satisfaction and the level of workload.

• There are positive, statistically significant correlations between perceived stress dimensions and the level of workload.

• There are statistically significant differences between the 1st grade students and 3rd grade regarding the variables: total motivation, stress reactivity, stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Participants are a number of 70 undergraduate students, 35 in the 3rd grade, and 35 in the 1st grade, 65 female and 5 male, age between 20 and 25 years old, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest.

3.2. Measures

The instruments were: "Reactivity to stress in academic environment" (2011), "Students 'workload" (2014), "Response to everyday events" (2011), Motivation-Satisfaction questionnaire (Merfu, 2014). The instruments were applied after the consent certificate was completed.

Questionnaire "Reactivity to stress in academic environment" (2011) is the best tool for projects involving regular monitoring of stress or more elaborate academic arrangements containing primary scanning stress levels. It is a psychometric instrument for measuring academic stress developed specifically to achieve high levels of functionality in use. The scale was elaborated on a sample of students at psychology, Alpha Crombach=0.768.

Questionnaire "Students 'workload" (2014): It measures the level of workload concerning projects, homework, group targets for laboratories. The instrument has 14 items, with type response options "yes" / "no".

Adaptation to Stress Questionnaire: questionnaire with 12 items, with response options type "yes" / "no". It is the general assessment of sources of occupational stress of people of both sexes over 18 years of operating in a wide range of work environments in the fields of business, industrial, education etc. Each of the 12 items describing one work situation with the potential to generate stress and evaluates both its perceived severity, as well as its frequency of occurrence.

Questionnaire "Response to everyday events" (2011): The purpose of this questionnaire is to capture how things look and each student behavior style in academic environment. Although there are differences in how people react to different situations, intensity of sources and the effects of stress in general.

Academic Motivation-Satisfaction Questionnaire (Merfu, 2014): After cognitive skills, motivation, performance in academic environment is considered to be relevant in predicting second feature superior performance. This questionnaire is a diagnostic procedure measuring intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in academic environment.

3.3. Procedure

Procedure: each student was handed a consent form in which it was explained their participation in this research, what does this research and its goals and objectives are. The training was done with each questionnaire. They were asked, name, age, sex, college, faculty, and academic year.

3.4. Experimental design

Independent variable is the student's grade. Dependent variables are: total satisfaction-motivation, stress reactivity, stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management.

4. Results

For data computing SPSS 15 was used. To test the first three research hypothesis, regarding the correlation between the dependent variables, the non-parametric bivariate correlation Spearman statistical test was used.

Table 1. Correlation matrix for the 3rd grade students between dependent varialbes

Dependent variable		Stress reactivity	stress adaptation	students' workload	response to life events	stress management	total satisfaction-motivation
Stress reactivity	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	-,146	,205	,142	,016	-,401*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,402	,238	,416	,925	,017
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35
stress	Correlation	-,146	1,000	,018	-,185	-,072	,049

adaptation	Coefficient						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,402	.	,916	,288	,681	,779
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35
students' workload	Correlation Coefficient	,205	,018	1,000	-,234	,193	-,130
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,238	,916	.	,176	,266	,456
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35
response to life events	Correlation Coefficient	,142	-,185	-,234	1,000	-,089	,106
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,416	,288	,176	.	,611	,545
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35
stress management	Correlation Coefficient	,016	-,072	,193	-,089	1,000	-,035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,925	,681	,266	,611	.	,844
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35
total satisfaction-motivation	Correlation Coefficient	-,401*	,049	-,130	,106	-,035	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,017	,779	,456	,545	,844	.
	N	35	35	35	35	35	35

In Table 1 can be observed correlation matrix between the dependent variables. Thus for 3rd year students there is only one statistically significant correlation between the variables total and negative satisfaction-motivation and stress reactivity ($r = -.401$, $p < 0.05$). This only confirms the hypothesis that assumes that there is a statistically significant correlation between the variables total satisfaction, motivation and stress reactivity.

Data distributin was not normal for the dependet variables ($p<0.05$). Hence, for testing the hypothesis regarding the mean differences between the dependent variables, Maan Whitney nonparametric tes was applied.

Table 2. Ranks for dependent variables

	Grup1	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Stress reactivity	first grade	35	23,06	807,00
	third grade	35	47,94	1678,00
	Total	70		
stress adaptation	first grade	35	21,37	748,00
	third grade	35	49,63	1737,00
	Total	70		
students' workload	first grade	35	23,09	808,00
	third grade	35	47,91	1677,00
	Total	70		
response to life events	first grade	35	20,90	731,50
	third grade	35	50,10	1753,50
	Total	70		
stress management	first grade	35	18,00	630,00
	third grade	35	53,00	1855,00

	Total	70		
total satisfaction-motivation	first grade	35	20,49	717,00
	third grade	35	50,51	1768,00
	Total	70		

In table 2 can be seen the mean ranks and sum of ranks for the dependent variables according the two groups: first grade students and third grade students.

In order to test the fourth hypothesis, Maan Whitney nonparametric test for two independent groups was applied (table 3 and table 4).

Table 3. Test Statistics[a] for dependent variables: stress reactivity, stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events

	Stress reactivity	stress adaptation	students' workload	response to life events
Mann-Whitney U	177,000	118,000	178,000	101,500
Wilcoxon W	807,000	748,000	808,000	731,500
Z	-5,177	-6,033	-5,181	-6,132
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	,000

Table 4. Test Statistics for variables: stress management total motivation

	stress management	total satisfaction-motivation
Mann-Whitney U	,000	87,000
Wilcoxon W	630,000	717,000
Z	-7,303	-6,247
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000

The results confirmed the fourth hypothesis ($p<0.05$) and revealed statisticallly significant differences between the third gade students comparing with the first grade students for the dependent variables: total satisfaction-motivation, stress reactivity, stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management.

5. Discussion

Stress experienced by the students as present research highlights is statistically significantly higher for 3rd year students compared to first year grade, as well as dependent variables are measured: total satisfaction-motivation, stress adaptation, students' workload, response to life events, stress management (table 2, table 3 and table 4). This is because the last sessions overlap with the licensing written exam and dissertation achievement. Thus, charge in workload is higher in the 3rd year students comparing with first grade students. Further research will focus on expanding to specialties like mathematics, polytechnics, chemistry, and philosophy but also increase the study sample.

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